Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A method of purifying recombinant human erythropoietin from cell culture supernatants comprising ~~by~~ a combination of the following steps:

(a) differential saline precipitation;

(b) hydrophobic interaction chromatography;

(c) concentration and diafiltration;

(d) anionic exchange chromatography;

(e) cationic exchange chromatography;

(f) concentration and diafiltration; and

(g) molecular exclusion chromatography.

2. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein steps ~~a)~~ (a) through ~~g)~~ (g) are performed in the following order: (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g).

3. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein steps ~~a)~~ (a) through ~~g)~~ (g) are performed in the following order: (a), (c), (d), (e), (b), (f) and (g).

4. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein step ~~a)~~ (a) comprises adding ammonium sulfate to said culture supernatant, followed by centrifugation.

5. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein step (b) comprises using a hydrophobic interaction matrix.

6. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 5, wherein said hydrophobic interaction matrix ~~employed~~ is Phenyl Sepharose 6 Fast Flow.

7. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein step (d) comprises using an anionic exchange matrix.

8. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 7, wherein said anionic exchange matrix is Q-Sepharose Fast Flow.

9. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein step (e) comprises using a cationic exchange matrix.

10. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 9, wherein said cationic exchange matrix is SP-Sepharose Fast Flow.

11. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein step (g) comprises using a molecular exclusion matrix.

12. (currently amended) The method of ~~Claim~~ claim 11, wherein said molecular exclusion matrix ~~employed~~ is Sephacryl S-200 HP.

13. (currently amended) A substantially pure erythropoietin, produced according to the method of ~~Claim~~ claim 1.

14. (currently amended) The erythropoietin according to ~~Claim~~ claim 13, wherein said ~~EPO~~ erythropoietin has a purity exceeding 99% as determined by a ~~polyacrilamide~~ polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis analysis (SDS-PAGE) and reverse phase and molecular exclusion liquid chromatography.

15. (currently amended) The erythropoietin according to ~~Claim~~ claim 13, wherein said ~~EPO~~ erythropoietin is characterized by a series of isoforms of isoelectric point values between 3.0 and 4.5.

16. (currently amended) The erythropoietin according to ~~Claim~~ claim 13, wherein said ~~EPO~~ erythropoietin comprises ~~shows homology to~~ the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.